

LITERARY NOTES.

The current number of *L'Art* has a contribution from the Rev. Dr. H. Powers on the Decorative Art Society of New York.

Friedrich Martin has compiled the "Statesman's Year Book" for sixteen consecutive years, and in recognition of his work, Lord Beaconsfield recently placed him on the Civil List for a pension of £100 yearly.

Macmillan & Co. are about to publish the first volume of a large work on the history of the alphabet. This volume will treat wholly of the Scandinavian runs, and their connections with the Irish Oghams. The author, Isaac Taylor, concludes that the Gothic tribes east of the River Vistula acquired a knowledge of the alphabet from the Greek colonists and traders on the Dnieper. The work has been in preparation for several years.

It is announced who twenty-four of the hundred greatest men in the new work projected by Sampson Low & Co., will be. Of poets, Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare are named; of artists, Phidias, Raphael and Beethoven; of philosophers, Socrates, Aristotle and Bacon; of preachers, St. Paul, St. Augustine and Luther; of historians, Herodotus, Tacitus and Gibbon; of men of science, Archimedes, Newton and Cuvier; of warriors, Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon, and of inventors, Gutenberg, Arkwright and Watt. The volumes will be folios, and there will be eight of them.

The first two volumes of Sampson Low &

Co.'s new series of illustrated biographies of the great artists have just been published. They are "Rembrandt" and "Titian." "Rembrandt" and "Van Dyck," will be ready this month. The plan is to publish one volume every fortnight and to furnish a series at a price within reach of every one, which shall combine the results of recent investigations in Germany, the Netherlands and elsewhere. These investigations are important, as they correct old statements which have been proved to be untrue, impart new facts, and add, it is said, considerably to one's interest in the lives of the artists. New light has been cast particularly upon the lives of Michael Angelo, Rembrandt, Raphael, Van Dyck, Holbein, Titian, etc. Prices of the art and the examples of art will be given in each volume. The ornamental design for the binding has been adopted from the title-page of a copy of "Terence" which was exhibited in Venice in 1499.

The Mather Age of American literature affords occasion to *The Saturday Review* for a goodly outburst of grim satire on the writings of that time. The books printed by those dreadful divines "breathed out nothing but thunderings and slaughter against every dissident." Toleration was condemned as a vice, and had Sir Thomas Browne ventured to talk his "Religio Medicus" in Boston, "he would have run great risk of sitz架 and a whipping." Even the Restoration did not help matters. Little is known at that time with Sedley and Etheridge was a plausor and humane thing than it was in Boston where Edward Hopkins denounced sinners till he bled at the nose, and where "that ghostly divine, Increase Mather," hunted witches to death. Indeed, the history of early colonial literature in this country is "little else than a catalogue of unkindness and a series works in defense of the most unkindly religion that was ever yet devised for man." It was a kind of literary madness that seized the colonists—"the desire of establishing possessed them," and "the apophysis of piousness dittus was witnessed in the ascent of Increase Mather, heretical and heresiarched, into the literary heavens of Boston; and, when his mantle fell from that empyrean height on still more crass and ignominious Clinton, he was sure that this poor creature might insensibly deserted could never, as long as time might last, wield the sceptre of hellishness."

An autograph letter of Henry VIII. is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and is now published, it is believed for the first time. Letters in his hand are known to be exceedingly rare, and collectors have thought themselves fortunate to get those which he dictated, and to which his signature was afterward appended. The characters are described as "stiff, upright, zig-zag," proving the handwriting to be the King's own. It is doubted if any other autograph letter of his exists, with the exception of those to Anne Boleyn, in the Vatican, at Rome, but they are all brief. The present letter is very curious and valuable in that it shows more clearly than any other the King's apprehensions of Cardinal Wolsey, even when he seemed most to trust him. He avows his desire to keep the master to which it relates from the knowledge of the Cardinal. The letter is addressed to "Mr. Secretary," without giving the name, but it is believed that Dr. Knight, whom Henry had sent to the Pope on his own account in 1527, under the impression that Wolsey was not doing his best in the cause of the Church, is the person referred to. Three draft bills are mentioned. The first had been privately furnished to Dr. Knight, but afterward became known to Wolsey; hence the King in this letter cancels it, and includes a second, saying: "Nevertheless I do now send to you the copy of another which I have sent the master, but they are not much more discreete than to me to have living [for] to any draft the lord cardinal or any other can fynd [!] will you buthe to kepe it secret & to sollicite that it may be made in due forme kepinge the effects & tenor thereof and with all diligencie (it wots impeirate to send it to me.)"

MR. TENNYSON'S NEW POEM.

The dedicatory ode to the Princess Alice, written by the Poet Laureate, and published in the current number of *The Nineteenth Century*, is as follows:

Dear Princess, live on—If that the fatal was,
Born of life and love, divorce the not
From me; and if that the world we call
The spirit shall not all at once from this—
Then perhaps—
The meadow's my heart of the people's pride,
From thine own State, and all the wealth of realm,
Ascents to thee; and the March morn that sees
Thy south-brother's bridal orange-blown,
Breaks thyself the way and press of the grave,
And makes thyself the earth to whom I can tell—
May send one ray to thee; and who can tell—
Though England's England-loving daughter—
Dying so English their valiant have her fax.
Born to me—But that some broken gleam from our poor earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee, our fair
At thy pale feet shall beat the dead of the deads—
Of England, and her banner in the East!

The poem on the defeat of the Duke of Wellington, written by the Poet Laureate, and published in the current number of *The Nineteenth Century*, is as follows:

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